

## Tripartite Social Summit, October 16, 2018

### Speech by Ludger Ramme, President

*English translation, check against delivery*

Dear Presidents,  
Dear Chancellor Kurz,  
Dear representatives of social partners,

I am glad for the opportunity that I am given to contribute to the debate with the position of managers. I am here speaking on behalf of both my organisation, CEC European Managers, and our friends of Eurocadres.

The last chance Commission, as President Juncker put it, has rightfully put some of the key challenges of our time on the political agenda: the social dimension of Europe, migration, climate change and digitalisation. However, for a strong and united Europe to flourish, we need more transformational leadership drawing a picture of our future and showing the way to get there.

The overarching question of the aforementioned challenges is how we can ensure that all citizens and organisations can see them as opportunities to be taken. The European social market economy puts a strong emphasis on individual freedom, equal opportunities and social welfare.

Only together they make sense, only together we can update this model.

In my view, to strengthen the framework conditions ensuring that everyone can get to their full potential must be on top of the political agenda. Education, social protection, investments in infrastructure and the promotion of diversity and the absence of discrimination are key to achieving social progress in Europe. But we also have to push for more professional mobility within our continent. An extended Erasmus+ programme accessible to employees could be an excellent tool to bring professional mobility and lifelong learning together.

Secondly, we need to actively shape the digital revolution to create future jobs, better working conditions and develop sustainable business models. Artificial Intelligence could help us attain policy objectives. But no algorithm should ever replace informed human decision-making and accountability, rooted in our ethics and laws.

If we are to keep up with global competitors, we have to make science and data more available, set global standards and promote transversal leadership skills to cope with an increasingly complex world. The contribution managers can give in this respect is significant, and for this their voice deserves being heard.

And finally, we have to overcome our divisions. Europe's success stems from innovatively dealing with seeming antagonisms such as state vs. market, security vs. freedom or nation vs. Europe. We have to invest more in what unites us. We have to become excellent in research and education, excellent in implementing the industrial policy strategy, excellent in the circular, green and sharing economy and excellent in providing people with the necessary competences and safety to be able to drive the much-needed changes.

To achieve that, we need courage. Courage to strengthen our Europe, instead of playing it down. Courage to listen and learn from each other. Courage to realise that we may lose everything, if we don't.

Each and every one of us.

Thank you for your attention.